

Microsoft Press

# Computer Dictionary

Third Edition

**Microsoft** Press

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## electrostatic discharge

conducting path. Electrostatic charges are used in copiers and laser printers to hold toner particles on a photoconducting drum and in flatbed plotters to hold the plot medium in place.

**electrostatic discharge** \ə-lek`trō-stat`ik dis`chärj\ *n.* The discharge of static electricity from an outside source, such as human hands, into an integrated circuit, often resulting in damage to the circuit. *Acronym:* ESD (E`S-D`).

**electrostatic plotter** \ə-lek`trō-stat`ik plot`ər\ *n.* A plotter that creates an image from a dot pattern on specially coated paper. The paper is electrostatically charged and exposed to toner, which adheres to the dots. Electrostatic plotters can be up to 50 times faster than pen plotters but are more costly. Color models produce images through multiple passes with cyan, magenta, yellow, and black. *See also* plotter. *Compare* electrophotographic printers, pen plotter.

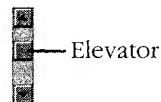
**electrostatic printer** \ə-lek`trō-stat`ik prin`tər\ *n.* *See* electrostatic plotter.

**elegant** \el`ə-gənt\ *adj.* Combining simplicity, terseness, efficiency, and subtlety. On the academic side of computer science, elegant design (say, of programs, algorithms, or hardware) is a priority, but in the frenetic pace of the computer industry, elegant design normally is sacrificed for the sake of speeding a product's development, frequently resulting in bugs that are difficult to correct.

**element** \el`ə-mənt\ *n.* **1.** Any stand-alone item within a broader context. For example, a data element is an item of data with the characteristics or properties of a larger set; a picture element (pixel) is one single dot on a computer screen or in a computer graphic; a print element is the part of a daisy-wheel printer that contains the embossed characters. *See also* daisy-wheel printer, data element, graphics primitive, pixel, thimble. **2.** In markup languages such as HTML and SGML, the combination of a set of tags, any content contained between the tags, and any attributes the tags may have. Elements can be nested, one within the other. *See also* attribute (definition 3), HTML, markup language, SGML.

**elevator** \el`ə-vā`tər\ *n.* The square box within a scroll bar that can be moved up and down to change the position of text or an image on the

screen. *See the illustration. Also called* scroll box, thumb. *See also* scroll bar.



*Elevator.*

**elevator seeking** \el`ə-vā`tər sē`kēng\ *n.* A method of limiting hard disk access time in which multiple requests for data are prioritized based on the location of the data relative to the read/write head. This serves to minimize head movement. *See also* access time (definition 2), hard disk, read/write head.

**elite** \ē-lēt`, ā-lēt`, ə-lēt`\ *n.* **1.** A size of fixed-width type that prints 12 characters to the inch. **2.** A fixed-width font that may be available in various type sizes. *See also* monospace font.

**ELIZA** \ə-lī`zə\ *n.* A program, modeled on Rogerian psychotherapy, that conducts simulated conversations with humans by echoing responses and posing questions based on key words in earlier comments. It was created by Dr. Joseph Weizenbaum, who considered it a bit of a joke and was alarmed that people took it seriously.

**ellipsis** \ə-lip`sis\ *n.* A set of three dots (...) used to convey incompleteness. In many windowing applications, selection of a command that is followed by an ellipsis will produce a submenu or a dialog box. In programming and software manuals, an ellipsis in a syntax line indicates the repetition of certain elements. *See also* dialog box, syntax.

**elm** \elm\ *n.* Short for **electronic mail**. A program for reading and composing e-mail on UNIX systems. The elm program has a full-screen editor, making it easier to use than the original mail program, but elm has largely been superseded by pine. *See also* e-mail<sup>1</sup>. *Compare* Eudora, pine.

**e-mail**<sup>1</sup> or **E-mail** or **email** \ē`māl\ *n.* **1.** The exchange of text messages and computer files over a communications network, such as a local area network or the Internet, usually between computers or terminals. **2.** An electronic text message.

**e-mail**<sup>2</sup> or **E-mail** or **email** \ē`māl\ *vb.* To send an e-mail message.

**e-mail address** \ē'māl a`dres, ə-dres` \ *n.* A string that identifies a user so that the user can receive Internet e-mail. An e-mail address typically consists of a name that identifies the user to the mail server, followed by an at sign (@) and the host name and domain name of the mail server. For example, if Anne E. Oldhacker has an account on the machine called baz at Foo Enterprises, she might have an e-mail address aeo@baz.foo.com, which would be pronounced "A E O at baz dot foo dot com."

**e-mail filter** \ē'māl fil`tər \ *n.* A feature in e-mail-reading software that automatically sorts incoming mail into different folders or mailboxes based on information contained in the message. For example, all incoming mail from a user's Uncle Joe might be placed in a folder labeled "Uncle Joe." Filters may also be used either to block or accept e-mail from designated sources.

**embedded** \em-bed`əd \ *adj.* In software, pertaining to code or a command that is built into its carrier. For example, application programs insert embedded printing commands into a document to control printing and formatting. Low-level assembly language is embedded in higher-level languages, such as C, to provide more capabilities or better efficiency.

**embedded command** \em-bed`əd kə-mand` \ *n.* A command placed in a text, graphics, or other document file, often used for printing or page-layout instructions. Such commands often do not appear on screen but can be displayed if needed. In transferring documents from one program to another, embedded commands can cause problems if the programs are incompatible.

**embedded controller** \em-bed`əd kən-trō`lər \ *n.* A processor-based controller circuit board that is built into the computer machinery. *See also* controller.

**embedded hyperlink** \em-bed`əd hī`pər-lēnk` \ *n.* A link to a resource that is embedded within text or is associated with an image or an image map. *See also* hyperlink, image map.

**embedded interface** \em-bed`əd in`tər-fās` \ *n.* An interface built into a hardware device's drive and controller board so that the device can be directly connected to the computer's system bus. *See also* controller, interface (definition 3). *Compare* ESDI, SCSI, ST506 interface.

**em dash** \em`dash \ *n.* A punctuation mark (—) used to indicate a break or interruption in a sentence. It is named for the em, a typographical unit of measure that in some fonts equals the width of a capital M. *Compare* en dash, hyphen.

**EMF** \E`M-F` \ *n.* *See* electromotive force.

**emitter** \ə-mit`ər, ē-mit`ər \ *n.* In transistors, the region that serves as a source of charge carriers. *Compare* base (definition 3), collector.

**emitter-coupled logic** \ə-mit`ər-kup-lɔj`ik, ē-mit`ər- \ *n.* A circuit design in which the emitters of two transistors are connected to a resistor so that only one of the transistors switches at a time. The advantage of this design is very high switching speed. Its drawbacks are the high number of components required and susceptibility to noise. *Acronym:* ECL (E'C-L).

**EMM** \E`M-M` \ *n.* *See* Expanded Memory Manager.

**e-money** or **emoney** \ē`mən`ē \ *n.* Short for **electronic money**. A generic name for the exchange of money through the Internet. *Also called* cybercash, digicash, digital cash, e-cash.

**emotag** \ē`mō-tag` \ *n.* In an e-mail message or newsgroup article, a letter, word, or phrase that is encased in angle brackets and that, like an emoticon, indicates the attitude the writer takes toward what he or she has written. Often emotags have opening and closing tags, similar to HTML tags, that enclose a phrase or one or more sentences. For example: <joke>You didn't think there would really be a joke here, did you?</joke>. Some emotags consist of a single tag, such as <grin>. *See also* emoticon, HTML.

**emoticon** \ə-mō`ti-kon` \ *n.* A string of text characters that, when viewed sideways, form a face expressing a particular emotion. An emoticon is often used in an e-mail message or newsgroup post as a comment on the text that precedes it. Common emoticons include :- ) or :) (meaning "I'm smiling at the joke here"), ;- ) ("I'm winking and grinning at the joke here"), :-( ("I'm sad about this"), :-7 ("I'm speaking with tongue in cheek"), :D or :-D (big smile; "I'm overjoyed"), and :-O (either a yawn of boredom or a mouth open in amazement). *Compare* emotag.

**EMS** \E`M-S` \ *n.* Acronym for **Expanded Memory Specification**. A technique for adding memory to